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Chair: Mr. Yohanna (Vice-Chair) (Nigeria)

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*In the absence of Mr. Momen (Bangladesh),
Mr. Yohanna (Nigeria), Vice-Chair, took the Chair.*

The meeting was called to order at 3:15 p.m.

Agenda item 20: Implementation of the outcome of the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II) and strengthening of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) (A/66/8, A/66/281, A/66/282 and A/66/326)

1. **Mr. Clos** (Executive Director, UN-Habitat), introducing the report of the Governing Council of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme on its twenty-third session, contained in document A/66/8; the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the outcome of the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II) and strengthening of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat), contained in document A/66/281; the report of the Secretary-General on the third United Nations conference on housing and sustainable urban development (Habitat III), contained in document A/66/282; and a note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report on the coordinated implementation of the Habitat Agenda, contained in document A/66/326, said that the convening of a third United Nations conference on housing and sustainable urban development (Habitat III) in 2016 had been among the most important issues discussed by the Governing Council of UN-Habitat at its twenty-third session. The report of the Secretary-General, in document A/66/282, made the case for holding the conference in the light of a number of new developments. He strongly hoped that the General Assembly would decide to convene Habitat III in 2016. He also urged Governments to include sustainable urban development and the role of cities and local authorities in the outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20) in 2012.

2. UN-Habitat had been carrying out a process of organizational reform since February 2011, with the assistance of the Department of Management, with a view to enhancing efficiency, productivity, transparency and accountability. Productivity and efficiency would be improved through the use of flex teams to deliver clearly defined results; and transparency and accountability would be achieved through the adoption of a project-based approach to all

substantive work. Organizational reform had reached an advanced stage and the intention was to roll out the new organizational structure and methods of work in January 2012.

3. During the reporting period, UN-Habitat had supported 33 countries in implementing slum upgrading and slum prevention policies. In the area of climate change, it had published its *Global Report on Human Settlements 2011 — Cities and Climate Change*, in April 2011, which identified innovative mitigation and adaptation measures that were supportive of sustainable urban development. In addition, UN-Habitat supported capacity-building for urban leadership in mainstreaming climate change issues into urban development in a number of countries. It was also continuing its activities in the area of post-disaster and post-conflict reconstruction.

4. **Mr. Laguna** (Mexico) asked for additional information about the difficulties and challenges involved in the planning of the work of UN-Habitat.

5. **Mr. Clos** (Executive Director, UN-Habitat) replied that planning the work involved taking account of a complex system of different inputs, including requests for help addressed to the Programme, strategic frameworks established by the General Assembly, the requirements of various different committees and the expectations of urban stakeholders, including donors. The thrust of the current process of organizational reform was to achieve a better alignment between the strategic plan, the budget and the organizational aspects of the administration of the Programme, in order to diminish the number of circuits and reporting lines. For example, some studies indicated that the time spent by the Programme's professionals on writing reports was over 25 per cent, which was too high and must be reduced. As UN-Habitat was expecting to be working with a reduced income in the near future, owing to the financial crisis, it needed to strive for increased productivity and efficiency, the more so as the process of urbanization was expected to continue to intensify.

6. **Mr. Suárez Salvia** (Argentina), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, emphasized the important role played by UN-Habitat in the overall pursuit of sustainable development. In particular, the Programme should continue identifying and sharing innovative urban development planning and management approaches and practices that were

responsive to the global challenge of climate change. The report of the Secretary-General presented a sufficient case for holding the Habitat III conference in 2016, in order to provide a forum for reviewing the Habitat Agenda in the light of new and emerging issues.

7. The Group of 77 and China was concerned about the continued increase in the number of slum dwellers, now approaching one billion, despite the attainment of the Millennium Development Goal target of improving the lives of at least 100 million slum dwellers by 2020. Recalling that the Governing Council of UN-Habitat at its twenty-third session had adopted resolution 23/9 calling for the establishment of voluntary and realistic targets for slum improvement to be attained by 2020, with assistance from UN-Habitat, the Group requested that UN-Habitat and the developing countries be provided with the necessary financial support to that end.

8. The Group of 77 and China supported the medium-term strategic and institutional plan for 2008-2013 and its financing operations in support of pro-poor housing and urban development, considering them to be important instruments to help advance the Habitat Agenda. It also endorsed the Executive Director's call to Governments to include sustainable urban development in the outcome of the forthcoming Rio+20 Conference.

9. **Mr. Khan** (Indonesia) speaking on behalf of the member countries of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), said that ASEAN commended the strengthening of the existing institutional framework for human settlements development in order to deal with emerging challenges. While the ASEAN countries had shown resilience during the current global economic and financial crisis, many people in the largest cities continued to live in slum conditions. Indeed, it was ironic that the issue of housing should be one of the key elements defining the crisis: for developing nations with growing populations, there was a need to reduce the numbers of slum-dwellers by building decent and affordable housing units, but for some developed nations, the opposite was true: the excess building of residential units had been one of the determining factors creating the crisis.

10. The political commitment to a sustained global economic recovery must include policies of benefit to

the poorest and marginalized sectors of society. That would entail recognizing the limited access of poor people in developing countries to affordable, decent housing, and ensuring that financial systems and regulatory frameworks reflected the housing needs of low-income groups. It would also entail ensuring their increased access to land and credit, and their protection from arbitrary eviction. UN-Habitat was to be applauded for establishing innovative pro-poor housing and financing instruments, including in particular the Experimental Reimbursable Seeding Operation (ERSO). Technical assistance and capacity-building were also important, and that was an area in which UN-Habitat had a comparative advantage in assisting municipalities and local authorities to develop better urban governance, urban planning and institution-building.

11. ASEAN was heartened that the implementation of the medium-term strategic and institutional plan had produced a results framework that had improved the strategic focus and programme planning process of UN-Habitat. In the ASEAN countries, the UN-Habitat offices had done a remarkable job over the years in involving public and private stakeholders in decision-making and implementation of programmes for affordable housing projects to alleviate urban blight. The ASEAN countries had established an environmentally sustainable cities award in order to increase awareness of the importance of living in an environmentally sustainable way.

12. Many challenges remained. The recent flooding which had severely impacted many countries in South-East Asia pointed to the need for the issue of urbanization to be linked with the problems posed by climate change and rising sea levels. It was therefore crucially important for the urban development agenda to be fully integrated into the sustainable development debate, and the Rio+20 Conference. ASEAN reaffirmed its support for the convening of Habitat III in 2016. In June 2010, the ASEAN ministers responsible for housing and urban development had adopted the Solo Declaration and implementation plan in which they had stressed the importance of strengthening poverty alleviation programmes in urban areas.

13. **Mr. Blair** (Antigua and Barbuda), speaking on behalf of the member States of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), welcomed the endeavours of UN-Habitat in the area of advocacy, particularly its

role in alerting the international community to the impact of rapid urbanization. A persistent challenge was that of determining how to deal with the growth of mega-cities and urban sprawl in a sustainable manner. The promotion of sustainable patterns of consumption and production, particularly with regard to land-use, according to the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities, and taking into account the economic and social needs of developing countries, was critical to the fulfilment of the Habitat Agenda.

14. Implementation of the internationally-agreed goals on adequate shelter for all, sustainable human settlements development and slum eradication would require a comprehensive and integrated approach supported by nationally owned policies which were directed towards achieving full and productive employment and decent work for all; access to safe water and sanitation; the provision of modern, affordable energy services; and waste collection and disposal. Capacity-building at the regional level should also be a priority, which was achievable in part through the sharing of experiences and common regional policy formulation and implementation within the context of the Habitat Agenda and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

15. CARICOM commended UN-Habitat for the continued involvement of its human settlements experts in prevention, rehabilitation and reconstruction in disaster areas. It continued to support the medium-term strategic and institutional plan and ERSO. At the same time, CARICOM called upon development partners to provide UN-Habitat with the financial and technical support required to address the growing demands for assistance at both national and regional levels. The resources disbursed to the Programme were not proportionate to its many tasks, and the imbalance in core and non-core funding was a matter for concern. The continued unpredictability in the funding for the Programme created an imbalance between earmarked and non-earmarked contributions, as well as dependency on a small number of donors, and lessened the ability of the Programme to function in line with the priorities of Member States.

16. CARICOM fully supported the call for Habitat III to be convened in 2016. New and more diverse issues had emerged and familiar issues remained; the Conference would provide a framework for incorporating all of them into a more robust Habitat Agenda. CARICOM also hoped that the outcome of the

Rio+20 Conference would adequately address sustainable human settlements for all.

17. **Mr. Zampetti** (Observer for the European Union), speaking also on behalf of the candidate countries Croatia, Iceland, Montenegro, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Turkey; the stabilization and association process countries Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia; and, in addition, Georgia, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine, reiterated the European Union's reservation as to the premises on which the Chair had based the speaking order for the current meeting.

18. Worldwide urban population growth combined with poorly managed urban growth presented a significant challenge to the international community, particularly as it affected the provision of adequate shelter for all. Despite international efforts, 828 million people had been living in slums in 2010. UN-Habitat was therefore faced with huge tasks, further compounded by the current difficult financial climate.

19. The European Union remained committed to the vision of "Cities without Slums", which should be achieved, without forced evictions, through improvements in the lives of slum dwellers and the sustainable development of human settlements, with the participation of all stakeholders. Social inclusion required the promotion of effective access to quality social services, including decent and affordable housing, which was important for the full enjoyment of basic human rights.

20. The European Union recognized UN-Habitat's achievements over the previous year and looked forward to continuing progress in the delivery of its mandate, particularly through the crafting of a realistic agenda for the next five years. It welcomed the ongoing review of the Programme, which was a major step towards making it more efficient, accountable and transparent, and UN-Habitat's commitment, under the Delivering as One initiative, to building synergies with other United Nations entities, while forming strong partnerships at both national and local levels. It expected UN-Habitat to make a significant contribution to the Rio+20 Conference, which should accelerate and broaden the worldwide transition towards a green economy; that transition could not be achieved without the strong involvement of cities.

21. **Mr. Farias** (Brazil) said that continuing economic hardship coupled with climate change

challenges had direct impacts on urban settlement quality and management. Governments, must respond rapidly to population growth, particularly in developing countries, by providing affordable, sustainable housing. Cities could contribute to climate change mitigation by promoting energy efficiency. In addition, a development-oriented urbanization process could help to eradicate poverty and promote more equitable societies.

22. In Latin America, although much had been done to address the urban challenge, nearly one third of the urban population remained inadequately housed. Slum upgrading was therefore crucial and needed to be combined with appropriate social, economic and environmental policies. In that context, UN-Habitat's mandate was very important to Brazil, which had been actively supporting the work of its Governing Council, in particular by presenting at its twenty-third session the draft resolution on the new Global Housing Strategy to the year 2025. The usefulness of the expertise of UN-Habitat made it essential for the international community to allocate further resources to the Programme's existing financial facilities, while special financing mechanisms and pro-poor market stabilization measures were needed to give the world's one billion slum dwellers greater access to housing ownership. In addition, the potentialities of the housing sector for the overall health of the economy should be harnessed through supportive policies and priority financing.

23. **Mr. Laguna** (Mexico) said that UN-Habitat served as source of guidance for policy formulation and decision-making; his delegation called on it to continue its work for improved urban structuring, stronger legislation, institutional and financial consolidation, training, technology transfer and the recovery of public space. Monitoring of the Habitat Agenda, in addition to offering useful information on progress under the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation and the relevant MDGs, would provide useful input for more effective actions and policies in line with the goals of UN-Habitat. Mexico looked forward to Habitat III, which would provide an opportunity to take stock of global progress since Habitat II, analyse the new challenges facing the international community in respect of urban development and explore innovative strategies and policies to address the rapid pace of urbanization worldwide.

24. **Mr. Gao Ming** (China) said that the serious human settlement challenges faced by developing countries made it essential to strengthen international cooperation in that field. His Government was currently promoting large-scale affordable housing construction while further enhancing its control of the real estate market; it had also made steady progress in urban infrastructure construction and made tangible improvements in the urban ecological environment. To provide everyone with a place to live, in the context of specific population and land space constraints, it had adopted an urban housing policy aimed at increasing the availability of affordable housing through purchase, rental and construction. China had also undertaken action to ensure the rational positioning of large, medium-sized and small cities, as well as their coordinated development, with particular attention to making them more energy-efficient and environment-friendly.

25. **Ms. Eckey** (Norway) said that, in contrast with the first wave of urbanization in the twentieth century, the poor formed the majority of new urban residents. However, urbanization was a factor in economic growth, given that 75 per cent of economic production in the world was city-based. High urban population density reduced the per capita ecological footprint by reducing energy needs and offered an opportunity to maximize sustainability. International development discourse and practice must adapt to that reality and shift from containing urbanization to preparing for it. Norway therefore welcomed the new priorities of UN-Habitat; they were reflected in its own new aid policies, shaped by a conviction that better urban planning could contribute to a greener economy by promoting resource efficiency, reducing greenhouse gas emissions and creating more productive and liveable cities.

26. One of the neglected problems that the international community would have to address over the next decades was the predominantly urban "youth bulge", given that 40 per cent of the one billion slum dwellers in the world were below the age of 18. Young people would be the main agents of change in the future and cities the most important arenas for change.

27. **Ms. Pan** (Singapore) said that, while the lives of 227 million slum dwellers had improved in the past decade, thanks in particular to UN-Habitat, the remaining 830 million slum dwellers around the world still had little or no access to basic public services and

no protection from the elements. Increased affluence due to globalization and rural exodus due to the lure of jobs in cities together with extreme weather events were causing urban property prices to skyrocket. To ensure adequate housing, Governments must address the poverty-environment nexus: habitat challenges were inherently sustainable development issues. A balance must therefore be found between competing policy aims; that required strong coordination both nationally and in partnerships with the relevant United Nations bodies.

28. Singapore, one of the most densely-populated countries in the world, had succeeded in overcoming the constraints of its size and geography. It had put in place urban and land-use planning policies to achieve integrated, liveable high-density urban solutions; it had taken proactive measures to create sustainable, green lifestyles for its citizens; and it understood the need to plan for both pre- and post-disaster responses to habitat needs, through early implementation of adaptation and mitigation measures. Moreover, in response to the current challenges of unprecedented urbanization worldwide, Singapore had held the first World Cities Summit in 2008. It would be hosting the third Summit in 2012.

29. **Mr. Sinha** (India) said that the extent to which urban development was integrated into broader socio-economic planning would increasingly determine the effectiveness of global efforts to eradicate poverty, promote inclusive growth and reduce environmental stress. In India, following a massive population shift from rural to urban areas, his Government had identified urbanization as a core issue in its next five-year plan (2012-2017), recognizing that innovative, sustainable solutions were needed for cities of the future. His delegation looked to the Rio+20 Conference to give further impetus to that approach.

30. India supported UN-Habitat's governance review and was itself working for governance reform in its local bodies to make them a catalyst for change. In 2007, it had launched a national policy to ensure affordable housing for all, in both rural and urban areas, which included a programme to provide basic services to the poor; it had also enacted legislation to promote energy efficiency and conservation. India valued its partnership with UN-Habitat and called on it to not to restrict itself to questions of urban habitat but also to give attention to habitat in rural areas. His delegation urged all entities to contribute to further

capitalization to enable UN-Habitat to provide increased financial and seed capital support for slum upgrading and prevention. Enhanced efforts by the international community to provide financial and technical assistance remained crucial. India had shared housing technology with other developing countries within the framework of South-South cooperation.

31. **Ms. Phanarangsarn** (Thailand) said that the work of UN-Habitat was increasingly important in order to meet the evolving needs of member countries, in particular by responding to new urban challenges and finding ways of strengthening the institutional framework for human settlements development. Its promotion of urban planning as a tool to protect infrastructure and promote resilience against disasters was actively supported by her country, which had recently experienced severe flooding; Thailand encouraged UN-Habitat to coordinate with other relevant convention secretariats in carrying out its activities. Thailand likewise supported efforts to redefine UN-Habitat's governance structure with a view to reducing duplication with other United Nations entities; it proposed that its Governing Council and the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) should meet in alternate years.

32. UN-Habitat should step up its efforts to promote South-South and triangular cooperation in its work. Thailand for its part stood ready to share its experience with others, particularly in the provision of low-cost housing to the poor. It was also important that city dwellers, communities and the private sector should be encouraged to participate in urban planning and to find collective solutions to their city's problems, for example through public-private partnerships. Big cities around the world could not but have an impact on the achievement of sustainable development, the three pillars of which should accordingly be included in the outcome of the Rio+20 Conference. As a member of the Governing Council for 2012-2015, Thailand looked forward to continuing to cooperate closely with UN-Habitat on all relevant issues.

33. **Mr. Islam** (Bangladesh) said that rapid growth of urban slums and squatter settlements was a cardinal problem in many developing countries, particularly the least developed countries. He urged UN-Habitat to address urban poverty and inequalities by intensifying its work in the areas of slum upgrading and slum prevention, improving access to safe drinking water and sanitation, and promoting effective financing

mechanisms in support of slum improvement programmes. Failure to achieve those goals would risk turning the world into one massive slum. Sustainable urban development must be based on environmentally sound technologies, since while cities occupied only about 2 per cent of the world's land, they currently produced 70 per cent of its waste and greenhouse gas emissions.

34. Despite its limited resources, his Government had made extensive efforts to address the issue of rapid urbanization. It had put in place a detailed area plan for the city of Dhaka and was drawing up plans for other cities as well.

35. While UN-Habitat had made some progress in its resource mobilization efforts, its total resources were far from adequate to implement its mandate. The minimal proportion of core resources, unpredictability of funding and dependency on a small number of donors posed major obstacles to the effective functioning of the Programme. Bangladesh continued to support the medium-term strategic and institutional plan for 2008-2013 and ERSO; it urged the international community to provide active financial and technological support, including capacity-building, to achieve the goals of the Habitat Agenda.

36. **Mr. Röhlund** (International Organization for Migration (IOM)) said that IOM supported the convening of the Habitat III conference in 2016. Welcoming the recognition in the report of the Secretary-General (A/66/282) of the issues of internal and transnational migration, he noted that urban development must be sustainable; while sustainable rural development was important, it was clear that urban centres would dominate the future of human settlement activity. Part of urban growth would stem from rural-urban migration, encouraged both by the benefits of economic and social density in cities and by the lack of opportunities in rural areas. In order to ensure that such migration was beneficial, a two-pronged response should be instituted: rural development should be promoted so that migration would be a matter of choice rather than of necessity, and urban centres should proactively plan for those naturally occurring flows.

37. It must also be acknowledged that migrants from the countryside faced discrimination. Frequently stigmatized as poor or backward, migrants from the countryside faced formal or informal barriers to full

participation in urban life, making migration dangerous and leaving migrants vulnerable to exploitation and abuse. Consequently, city governments must proactively ensure the availability of sustainable shelter and provide equal access to urban life, including to education, health care and decent work.

38. Climate change was a major concern both for the impact it might have on stimulating rural-urban migration flows and for the viability of urban centres themselves. Rural-urban migration could alleviate pressure on areas where environmental degradation exacerbated by climate change was occurring, thereby increasing their long-term resilience. It was thus counterproductive to obstruct such migration flows, as that would impoverish populations, put them at enhanced risk and worsen environmental degradation in source areas. However, some urban centres, especially those located in low-income areas, struggled in dealing with both population growth and the effects of climate change. International assistance might thus be required to build the capacities of city governments. IOM stood ready to provide relevant technical assistance for migration management.

39. Notwithstanding the negative consequences of urban growth and rural-urban migration, there could be clear benefits of both. Not only were cities economically and socially dense, and thus a crucible for economic and social development, but they could also provide a viable alternative for sustainable living. Migration to cities could add to those benefits by establishing, either directly or inadvertently, economic links with rural areas for internal trade and investment. Rural-urban migrants were often also able to transmit progressive social values leading to social empowerment. Such migration movements could thus be a positive factor in equitable and inclusive national development.

Agenda item 19: Sustainable development (continued)
(A/66/87, A/66/297, A/66/298, A/66/298/Corr.1, A/66/337, A/66/388 and A/66/391)

(a) Implementation of Agenda 21, the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21 and the outcomes of the World Summit on Sustainable Development (continued) (A/66/287, A/66/304 and A/C.2/66/2)

- (b) **Follow-up to and implementation of the Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States** (*continued*) (A/66/218 and A/66/278)
- (c) **International Strategy for Disaster Reduction** (*continued*) (A/66/301)
- (d) **Protection of global climate for present and future generations of humankind** (*continued*) (A/66/291)
- (e) **Implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa** (*continued*) (A/66/291)
- (f) **Convention on Biological Diversity** (*continued*) (A/66/291)
- (g) **Report of the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme on its twenty-sixth session** (*continued*) (A/66/25)
- (h) **Harmony with Nature** (*continued*) (A/66/302)
- (i) **Sustainable mountain development** (*continued*) (A/66/294)
- (j) **Promotion of new and renewable sources of energy** (*continued*) (A/66/306)

40. **Mr. Hailu** (Ethiopia), said that his country was working to achieve balance and integration among the three pillars of sustainable development: economic development, social development and environmental sustainability. To that end, it had designed various policy tools which were people-centred and geared towards addressing the needs of the poor. Despite the global economic and financial crisis, Ethiopia had registered double-digit economic growth over the past seven years, and had been making significant strides through the successful implementation of its national plan on sustainable development and poverty eradication. Furthermore, with the participation of all stakeholders, including development partners, it had recently designed an ambitious growth and transformation plan, which set out to eradicate extreme poverty by doubling the size of the country's economy within the following five years.

41. In the area of climate change, Ethiopia had set up strict mechanisms through which all development projects must be assessed for their impact on the environment. Ethiopia had suffered the effects of climate change, in terms of cyclical droughts, erratic rainfall, desertification and rising temperatures. That situation required proactive government intervention, clear policy guidance and public awareness and preparedness. Ethiopia, like all developing countries, was a victim rather than a cause of climate change; it could not do much to arrest the impact of global climate change, but had to seek to mitigate the impacts.

42. While Ethiopia had made significant strides in economic and social development, the impact of climate change had often led to the reversal of hard-won gains in economic and social development. His Government had promulgated an environment policy in 1997 and had recently launched a green economy strategy which embraced two interrelated components: adaptation to climate change and mitigation of greenhouse gases. Ethiopia was aggressively undertaking programmes to conserve the country's soil, water and forest resources. It was also developing clean energy from hydropower, wind and geothermal sources for its own growth and even for the needs of its neighbours.

43. Ethiopia called upon all Governments to fully implement the Cancun Agreements and speed up climate change negotiations and urged its development partners to fulfil their commitments for climate change financing. Developing countries, especially those in Africa, needed to be supported financially and technologically.

44. **Ms. Bruell-Melchior** (Monaco) observed that the challenge facing the world was that of proving that investing in a people-centred and environmentally sustainable economy would bring with it opportunities for current and future generations, and for all partners, both public and private. The effects of climate change and of biodiversity loss, and the threat brought by food insecurity, meant that all three Rio conventions must be taken equally seriously.

45. Her delegation welcomed the initiative of the Secretary-General in setting up a high-level group on sustainable energy for all. For its part, Monaco had adopted a plan intended to control the demand for energy, promote the development of renewable energy sources and reduce emissions of greenhouse gases.

Subsidies were being provided to encourage the installation of solar heating systems.

46. The Rio+20 Conference must pay attention to the role played by the world's oceans, which covered 72 per cent of the Earth's surface and supported life. The objectives agreed on at the World Summit on Sustainable Development were likely to be achieved, if at all, only very slowly. A meeting of experts on that topic would be held in Monaco towards the end of the current month. His delegation also stressed the importance of international agreements, particularly the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, to ensuring effective protection and preservation of rare and fragile ecosystems and marine habitat, including coral reefs.

47. **Mr. Valero Briceño** (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) said that since the World Summit on Sustainable Development, the developing countries had made significant progress, but the developed countries had still not fulfilled their responsibilities. Regrettably, those countries persisted in ignoring the underlying causes for the progressive deterioration of the environment, and obstinately clung to a worn-out capitalist model which encouraged the overexploitation of natural resources and kept the world on the brink of environmental collapse. The developed countries had failed to meet their commitments to transfer financial and technological resources to the countries of the South. They were maintaining unsustainable production and consumption patterns and were voraciously sucking capital and resources out of the developing countries.

48. Although the 10-year framework of programmes on sustainable consumption and production had been adopted by all countries at the World Summit on Sustainable Development, the developed countries had distorted its objectives by promoting patterns of technological and financial neo-dependency. In the context of the review of the progress made towards achievement of the MDGs, the outcome document of the Rio+20 Conference should not establish new objectives which might be a distraction from reaching those Goals.

49. The countries of the North had focused solely on only one of the pillars of sustainable development, economic growth. The concept of "green economy" was based only on that pillar, thereby distorting the principles and objectives that had been agreed on. To

achieve a sustainable economy, it was necessary to adopt decisions that would transform the economic functioning of the global system, reverse the injustices and irrationalities of the market and make substantial changes in the international financial and commercial institutions. Only then would it be possible to establish a new development model based on equity, sovereign equality, shared interests, collaboration and solidarity among all States. In that regard, no unilateral measures or covert restrictions should be imposed against the goods and services of developing countries on grounds which were artificially linked to sustainable development. Such measures included protectionism, environmental compliance costs and conditions, and restrictions in the areas of trade, finance, official development assistance and other forms of international assistance.

50. Venezuela was constructing a development model whose centrepiece was the human being. His Government was pursuing a policy to eradicate poverty, discrimination and social exclusion, with the aim of achieving an inclusive and participatory society. Venezuela's natural resources served to strengthen social programmes at the national level and, at the regional level, allowed the country to pursue policies of integration and cooperation based on complementarity, not on the laws of the market. His Government was pursuing energy cooperation with other Latin American and Caribbean countries through the PetroCaribe initiative in order to promote economic and social development, finance renewable energy projects and increase oil reserves. The aim was not to replace one energy source by another: oil still had a leading place in power generation, and had a wide range of uses, but it needed to be supplemented by other, renewable, power sources.

51. **Ms. Haynes** (Trinidad and Tobago) said that climate change presented small island developing States such as her own with acute developmental challenges, compounded by the current global financial and economic instability. Rises in sea levels and sea surface temperatures together with ocean acidification had already begun to harm fisheries and agricultural productivity, undermine progress towards the MDGs and impede efforts to achieve sustainable development.

52. Although Trinidad and Tobago accounted for less than one per cent of global greenhouse gas emissions, and was a net exporter of oil and natural gas, it was doing its part to stabilize carbon dioxide levels in the

atmosphere by reducing its dependency on fossil fuels and had taken measures nationally to meet the objectives of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. It was seeking, in particular, to diversify its energy sector through an optimal mix of renewable energy, energy efficiency and clean fuel sources. However, the magnitude of the challenges facing Trinidad and Tobago was such that it could not withstand the threat alone: international solidarity was needed to assist the most vulnerable countries and reverse the damage done to their ecosystems. Developing countries like her own were doing their part, but it was also imperative that developed countries honour their commitments under the Framework Convention and its Kyoto Protocol. Her delegation accordingly joined the call for a second commitment period of the Kyoto Protocol, which was the only existing legally binding regime for the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions and the safeguarding of the global environment.

53. **Mr. Sydykov** (Kyrgyzstan) said that sustainable development was key to eradicating poverty, combating climate change and ensuring food and energy security. Notwithstanding the progress to date towards sustainable development, humankind continued to suffer from poverty and inequality, while climate change and natural disasters threatened to set at nought decades of productive development. Those issues were of particular concern to Kyrgyzstan, as a developing landlocked country, 90 per cent of whose territory consisted of mountains. Its topography rendered it particularly vulnerable to the effects of climate change, thus posing a potential threat to regional security. He drew attention, in particular, to the thawing of glaciers, which constituted the primary source of fresh water in that region, and called on developed countries, which bore historical responsibility for climate change, to do more to reduce atmospheric emissions and provide financial and technical assistance to developing countries.

54. Access to modern energy supply was also crucial to sustainable development, as reaffirmed by the Secretary-General, who, in his report in document A/66/287, had highlighted the critical role of energy in attainment of the MDGs and reducing the pressure on natural resources. In that context Kyrgyzstan applauded the proclamation by the General Assembly of 2012 as the International Year of Sustainable Energy for All and welcomed the Secretary-General's

identification, in the same report, of the proper management of water resources as an essential component of social and economic development.

55. Drawing attention to the vulnerable situation of populations in mountainous regions, he observed that their low food security was a potential cause of political instability and called on developed countries to shift their focus from forms of food aid which were prejudicial to development to a form of development assistance which helped developing countries become self-sufficient. Lastly, welcoming the recent World Mountain Conference held in Lucerne, Switzerland, on 11 and 12 October 2011, he expressed the hope that the outcome of that conference would inform preparations for the Rio+20 Conference and that the Conference would result in a political commitment to the development of mountain regions, in the face of contemporary threats and challenges.

56. **Mr. Daunivalu** (Fiji) said that current needs must be met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs. The key was to strike a balance between social, economic and environmental objectives, in particular by encouraging the growth of green businesses and renewable technologies. His delegation called for the full implementation of Agenda 21 and the integration of environmental and social concerns into all development processes. It also strongly supported the call for a third Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States and the formal establishment of a United Nations category of such States so as to ensure targeted and operationally effective support programmes for them. Like other Pacific islands, Fiji was dependent on the ocean as the basis for sustainable development. Ocean issues must be addressed to bring about the paradigm shift needed to respect planetary boundaries, eradicate poverty and reduce inequality.

57. Faced with the threat of climate change, which was the ultimate indicator of unsustainable development, the world must reduce its carbon footprint, improve infrastructure and build capacity in the most vulnerable States. States with coral reef ecosystems, in particular, needed technology transfers from developing countries to help them with adaptation and mitigation. His delegation therefore urged countries to support the draft resolution on the protection of coral reefs to be considered by the Committee.

58. **Mr. Errázuriz** (Chile) said that multilateralism was the way towards finding solutions to global problems of sustainability in keeping with the Rio Principles, in particular Principle 7, which recognized States' common but differentiated responsibilities for environmental degradation. The international community must, as a matter of urgency, act to save the planet from the economic, financial and especially human consequences of pollution and the squandering of resources. It needed to renew its political commitment to the three pillars of sustainable development and, accordingly, to find the additional resources needed to mobilize efforts to advance the cause of sustainability. The greening of the economy was a means to that end and called for due attention to the differing levels of economic, social and environmental development in each country and strong, inclusive economic growth through the development of human resources, a bridging of the technological divide and greater market access for the products of developing countries. Sustainability also required better use of natural resources, greater energy efficiency and the development of renewable energies. Chile was committed to the goal of ensuring that, by 2020, renewable energy sources would account for 20 per cent of its energy consumption. He concluded with a call for greater efforts to reduce the risks of natural disasters, which mostly affected the most vulnerable countries, with the paramount aim of protecting life in all its forms.

59. **Mr. Asim** (Pakistan) said that sustainable development offered a means of reconciling two competing concerns: acceleration of the pace of productive economic expansion and deceleration of the pace of exploitation of the world's natural resources. Against the backdrop of the Doha Development Round deadlock and efforts to bury the Kyoto Protocol, action had to be taken as a matter of urgency to find a way forward. The forthcoming Rio+20 Conference offered a major opportunity to forge a collective response to the critical challenges faced by most developing countries.

60. Looking ahead, Pakistan proposed an agreement on a green policy space for the international adjustments required to achieve a green economy in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication. Such adjustments would include: an intellectual property regime reoriented towards the diffusion of technology and not confined to innovation; greater flexibility for developing countries in

multilateral trading rules; development of a system-wide United Nations response to requests for international financial and technical support for green start-ups; and financial arrangements for the universal affordability of green technologies.

61. Agreement at the Rio+20 Conference also hinged on a viable reconfiguration of the institutional arrangements needed to achieve sustainable development. He stressed that the new setup must promote norms and ensure their implementation. Pakistan was also in favour of changes in the institutional design of UNEP to enable it to consolidate multilateral environmental agreements under the UNEP umbrella, engage more with civil society and the private sector, integrate environment and development as a core concern and secure additional and predictable funding.

62. Pakistan further proposed that the Rio+20 Conference should designate the United Nations Development Programme as lead agency for sustainable development efforts at the national level, in close collaboration with UNEP, and that the monitoring role of the Commission on Sustainable Development should be strengthened.

63. **Mr. Tachie-Manson** (Ghana) said that humanity's well-being and very survival hinged on the achievement of sustainable development. As a sub-Saharan country, Ghana was dependent on land and therefore, pursuant to the decisions adopted at the 10th session of the Conference of Parties to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, looked to the Global Environmental Facility to increase its resource allocations to enable the Convention secretariat to take the necessary action, particularly in Africa. His delegation also expected the outcome document of the Rio+20 Conference to propose measures to improve agricultural productivity and food security, promote research and development on sustainable land use and biotechnology for sustainable development, ensure access to secure and sustainable energy sources and support green industry. Ghana urged the international community to honour its commitments to Africa, including under Agenda 21, and to take the opportunity of the Rio+20 Conference to ensure the full operationalization of all the mechanisms already agreed upon, especially the proposed Green Climate Fund.

64. **Mr. Pfaffernoschke** (Germany) said that lack of access to water resources in sufficient quantity and

quality was a priority concern around the world, as it was often a major impediment to development. Water resource availability underpinned food and energy production as well as the provision of drinking water. At the same time, a rapidly growing world population was driving up the global demand for energy and food, putting additional pressure on water, energy and food resources, especially in developing countries and emerging economies. A water, energy and food security nexus perspective was therefore required to understand better the interlinkages and find synergies between the three sectors. Such a perspective would help to bring an intersectoral dimension to sectoral decisions and facilitate the identification of trade-offs between the sectors for better informed decision-making. His Government was accordingly organizing in Bonn from 16-18 November a conference that would focus on that nexus and was designed to provide significant input for the preparation of the Rio+20 Conference.

The meeting rose at 6 p.m.